

Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group

MINUTES
April 25, 2012



Paul R. LePage
Governor, State of Maine

Paul K. Vestal, Chair
Edwin P. Chester, Esq. Vice Chair

I. Roll Call:

Present: Ned Chester, Jim Foss, Randall Liberty, Margaret Longworth, Dan Nichols, Jonathan Shapiro, Barry Stoodley, Christine Thibeault, and Paul Vestal

Absent: Mark Boger, Richard Brown, Emma Burke, Abigail Comee-McCourt, Dalene Dutton, Jacinda Goodwin, Jamie Johnson, Hannah McMullen, Charles LaVerdierre, Joan McDonald, Doug Patrick and Patrick Walsh

Staff: Ryan Andersen, Compliance Monitor

Guest: Therese Cahill-Low, Office of Child and Family Services, Nicole District Court in Portland

Paul Vestal, JJAG Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00AM and welcomed JJAG members and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Paul introduced Therese Cahill-Low, Director of Children and Family Services. Paul stated that he had asked Therese Cahill-Lowe to speak to the JJAG as the interface between the DOC, Education, and the kids we all work with.

II. Presentation – Therese Cahill-Low:

Therese Cahill-Low, Director of the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) introduced herself to the JJAG and gave everyone a background of her experience working with children, stating that she has been a counselor in many schools and has a vast and different experience with children in all levels of juvenile concerns. Therese explained that she felt that the juvenile justice system should be the last resort and her focus will be on what we can do to prevent kids from getting into the system. Therese updated everyone on the changes that her department has been going through and explained that the OCFS is focused on prevention and will be working very closely with providers in the community. Therese stated that because of all the changes going on, she hasn't had a chance to work outside of the department, but hopes once the Legislature is not in session that it will free some things up so she can focus on the work that benefits children. Therese stated that she has not had the chance to visit our two new facilities but is glad of the changes that have been made around the treatment of juveniles in the system.

Barry updated Therese on the changes that have been made focused on detention.

Therese explained the goal of the reorganization and how it gets rid of all of the barriers when you are looking at children and families. She explained that the OCFS would be focused on identifying more resources that are available to children. They

now have a Policy and Prevention Unit, a Care and Intervention Unit and a Community Partnership Unit. OCFS is working to get children and families in the community matched up with resources in the community. She states that there is a need to identify what those resources are that already exist and those that aren't going to cost money. We need to start thinking of the Career Center, schools, Credit Unions and Education as resources. Those are resources that already exist and we don't have to spend money to use them. Therese went on to explain the problem of identification around MaineCare and Medicaid. Therese stated that they are being scrutinized by the central office in Baltimore at the way we are handling the PNMI and providing those services. The Federal office wants us to do things differently and not rely on Medicaid so that has been the focus of her department since November. They have been working on how to pay for certain services that children need without relying on MaineCare. Therese indicated that they will run out of money *and* places to cut funding.

Barry talked about his meeting with Dr. Peter Greenwood, along with 20 other states, regarding evidence based programs. Barry explained that Maine is in the top four in the Country in terms of access. We have a strong foundation in this work. Barry went on to explain that we have been invited by Dr. Greenwood and the folks from Northeastern University to continue with this collaboration with other states to learn how we can continue the process of supporting evidenced based programs because of the costs associated with it. Barry indicated to Therese that the JJAG would be happy to collaborate with DHHS.

Ned stated that one of the ways to work around the MaineCare issue for our clients is to try to find more ways to access more resources centered around the Department of Labor and Housing. Those are areas that we don't seem to connect with. We need to begin to have those conversations. Ned expressed his concerns about his clients who are turning 18 with the limited resources available. Some of his clients can't take care of themselves but are not dangerous criminals. Defense attorneys try to get the court to enter them into the DHHS so they will be eligible for those services.

Therese addressed this issue by stating that they need to change some of the policies and they have collaborated with stakeholders to talk about how to transition these kids. Therese asked if someone would like to be on this stakeholders group and Margaret Longsworth agreed to participate. Margaret also expressed her concerns stating that housing was a big problem. The group went on to discuss the problem with housing as it pertains to juveniles who have committed crimes not being able to get housing because of their criminal background. There was a lengthy discussion regarding transition problems. Therese reassured everyone that this was one of the areas that they were going to be focusing on. Also discussed was the success between schools and the Collaborative Problem Solving approach and how well that was working in the schools that were participating and that might be a resource that she could use.

III. Minutes:

The minutes for the March 28, 2012 JJAG meeting were approved with corrections. Dr. Ross to be changed to Dr. Ross Greene.

Motion: To approve the March 28, 2012 Minutes

Moved: Jonathan Shapiro/Barry Stoodley/2nd

Action: Approved

IV. Chair Report – Paul Vestal, Jr.:

Paul gave his report by stating that letters went out to the Governor and a follow-up letter was sent to our Congressional Representatives regarding a request from the CJJ in support of continuous funding of juvenile programs. No response yet.

Paul also stated that next month Governor Paul LePage will be at the JJAG Meeting and he is scheduled for half an hour. Paul thought it would be great to have Dr. Ross Greene at the meeting to talk about CPS.

Other suggestions:

- Principal or teacher to talk about the CPS program at their school.
- Restorative Practices
- DMC
- JJIC
- Federal Mandate
- Success of Sexual Treatment programs

Paul stated that with such a short amount of time we will have to wait and see. We should have some materials for him to read.

V. Committee/Department Reports:

Legislative Committee – Christine Thibeault stated that there was nothing new to report other than the new driving statute affecting young people with driving licenses but that doesn't involve the juvenile justice system. Christine also spoke about the new Commission on Interstate Compact for Juveniles that is now separate from adults. Christine stated that she is looking forward to working with Mark on that. The new juvenile driving law takes effect in three or four months.

Department of Corrections – Barry Stoodley stated that there have not been many changes in juvenile corrections, but there have been discussions which at some point he will be able to talk about; especially it if there are any major changes regarding juveniles. The Community Reintegration Program is working out really well. The goal is zero returns. He is pleased about the training session in June with Karen Williams. Dr. Couridi will be coming back to Maine.

Department of Public Safety – Sgt. John Shapiro stated that he had nothing new to report other than Old Orchard Beach has come to a standstill on the Restorative Practices/Juvenile Review Board initiative. He is hoping to get them back on track soon. RSU 23 is moving ahead with restorative practices.

VI. Compliance Monitor Report – Ryan Anderson: Ryan updated the group reporting that he has been to 27 facilities including the two juvenile facilities, 3 county jails, 20 police departments, and 2 district courts. He also stated that he received a call from Chief Matthew Irwin from Presque Isle requesting decertification of his facility. It has not been approved yet, but Ralph Nichols, the DOC Director of Operations, will respond to their request to no longer hold juveniles at this facility. Ryan stated that he will continue to monitor the facility as non-holding. Ryan also reported the first suspected violation of the year he will be inspecting shortly. While he is not sure of the circumstances, it does not appear to be negligence on anyone's part.

VII. JJIC Report – Ned Chester: Ned Chester gave a brief update on the budget and allocations of juvenile justice funding. The House bill authorizes \$33 million dollars; the Senate budget includes \$55 million. The House has no funding for Title V and no funding for JABG. The Senate budget includes \$30 million for Title V with \$25 million of that earmarked for Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws program.

Ned gave his report on the JJIC and stated that it is continuing to meet. He explained that the JJIC was authorized for two years in 2010 and the chairs are working on reauthorization for three more years. Ned talked about the last meeting he attended and stated that the JJIC is assessing the status of the ten goals and the Chairs of the JJIC created an Executive Committee to move things along. Ned explained that the JJIC is committed to creating a two year plan. Much of the Education goal is underway. We do have legislation that mandates graduation rates. Ned discussed detention and commitment rates. Looking at commitments may be an issue that the JJIC is going to be taking on. Ned stated that they created the eight District Councils authorized in legislation and it appears that a few are having difficulties. One of the major challenges for us over the next two year cycle is to find out what the Councils are doing and to try to bring things on task. Ned stated that the JJAG supported the JJIC for the past two years and that most likely they will request funding again staffing. Ned explained that the JJAG should fund that position. The JJIC is committed to matching the JJAG money to be able to provide a full time staff position rather than the part-time position. Ned further states that the JJIC needs someone to focus primarily on community based resources.

Christine asked about fulfilling the mission and asked if we can get a person who has some leadership skills to make sure the district councils are doing what they are supposed to do. This person should have connections and leadership skills to get the Councils back on track. Christine asked if we wanted to put the financial resources into the leadership in each of those so they can be more effective than they have been.

Paul stated that there has always been a concern about the District Councils, their lack of establishing their groups and that some are not working on anything. They need to look at some of the existing resources. Paul stated that the JJIC will need to have a discussion about where they are going and it should not just be on money.

Christine mentioned that Christopher Northrop, Co-Chair of the JJIC, went back and looked at the Charter and the mission statement of the JJIC and noticed that we (Christine is a member) have just completely abandoned the continuing of services section. Christine stated that she hoped the JJIC would focus on making sure that each of the eight district councils are committed to all three missions which include the detention reduction, the confinement reduction, the expansion and expulsion reduction, and also the community services. She stated that there is not a lot of hope looking for resources at the state level.

Barry stated that the councils are a resource and that we do have a variety of resources in communities. He suggests that the JJIC needs to take information like this and put it back into the goals of the task force. Most of the councils would welcome being invited back to the table.

Christine was asked to talk about the Open House at the Cumberland County Court House which will be held on Monday night. Christine stated that this was proposed by an intern who is working with Regina Phillips of the City of Portland. Regina sits on the JJIC and is committed to DMC issues. Christine explained that the intern suggested that maybe we could have an Open House at the court for the families from other countries where their court system is not as friendly or as accommodating. Christine talked to Chief Justice Saufley, she agreed and offered a couple of security officers to be there for the evening. Ned, myself, a few Judges, and JCCOs are each going to briefly describe our role in the court process and explain the juvenile justice system here in Maine. It will be a first step in breaking down barriers for families from other countries who are in fear of the court system because of their own country's court system. We will explain court screening. Many fear the court may be looking for documentation or fear that they will be referred to INS. Christine went on to explain that this has been a collaboration between the City of Portland and

the JJAG. Christine also wants to work with Rod Bouffard, Superintendent of Long Creek Youth Development Center to bring one of the kids over to explain the whole process and how the court and the state really do take good care of kids. Christine and Noel are hoping to go into individual refugee and immigrant communities to explain what our goal is when we do have a juvenile on probation or community release and what we hope to accomplish. Christine stated that she is not sure how many are going to show up at the Open House but there may be as many as 30 to 40 people. The City is providing food, the JJAG is providing interpreters, and it will be held from 4:30 to 7:00 PM.

VII: Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at noon.

The next meeting will take place on May 23, 2012 at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

